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CONCERNING A NOBLEMAN

My friend felt pity
On the red battlefield
Where death and dying souls mingled.

The white face
Of a Japanese man on the ground
Held his eyes, like the resolute moon.

The white face,
The body without arms, without legs—
They moved my friend to speak:

“You suffer—
I am sorry for you.
May I help you?”

The wilful face
Rose from the ground,
Blooming into a flower of song:

“No,
I do not suffer—
I am Samurai.”

The flower fell;
The petals blew away
Into the spirit of Japan.